

Japanese nouns in school descriptions of Classical Japanese texts

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1. Nouns in Japanese grammar

In one of his books Ōno Susumu observed that, while it had been relatively easy for the Japanese of the Meiji Era to bring specialists from Europe and construct new roads, railways and bridges, it might not be so simple to employ foreign experts in order to write the grammar of the Japanese language. According to Ōno, the latter requires from a foreign researcher to enter into a group of people who have been raised in the spirit of the language and their perception of the world has been shaped by it (Ōno 1978: 2–3).

While it is possible both to consider the above statement as xenophobic and to regard on the basis of it that perhaps the author of this paper may also not be entitled to comment on school descriptions of Japanese nouns, the accounts of Japanese researchers on their own language reveal numerous comments that may be interpreted as deeply immersed in the Japanese grammatical tradition, without even judging them to be correct or not. To give an example, a Japanese dictionary of linguistics mentions that since there is no inflection of the Japanese nominal element *taigen* 体言, the notion of declension is not taken into account in Japanese grammar (Tanaka 1987: 150). It is, among others, the content of this statement that is going to be reviewed below.

Numerous astounding accounts on Japanese nouns may also be found in foreign attempts to describe Japanese grammar. Probably the most bizarre definition of the Japanese noun was provided by Roy An-

drew Miller, who noticed that it “is an uninflected word that occurs before the copula” (Miller 1967: 335). Quite apart from investigating whether and under what conditions Japanese nouns may indeed be described as uninflected and occur solely before the copula, it may be supposed that Miller, a prominent foreign researcher of Japanese, would probably have never defined in the above manner the nouns of his own native language, had he ever had the intention to do so.

2. Methodological background

This paper is devoted to the issue of nouns in school descriptions of Classical Japanese texts. The phrase *gembun itchi* 言文一致 ‘the unification of written and spoken styles of the language’ means in the tradition of Japanese grammar and linguistics that Contemporary and Classical grammar descriptions tend to merge – although the language(s) of old and of modern Japan are different. It may be instructive to also examine Contemporary Japanese nouns and their descriptions from the perspective of Classical Japanese. Several simple and commonly known examples of Japanese classical texts are going to be analyzed below, in order to show selected inconsistencies in the contemporary approach to Japanese nominal elements.

One striking feature of Japanese grammar, the one that does not become instantly visible to a foreign researcher, is how lexical and grammatical elements of the language are dealt with. Although the opposition between *shi* 詞 and *ji* 辞, which may be considered equal to the lexical and grammatical elements of the code, respectively, does exist in theory, it is commonly ignored in actual application to linguistic practice. A saying: *Shi wa jisha no gotoku, teniha wa sōgon gotoshi* 詞は寺社の如く、手爾葉は莊嚴如し ‘*shi* are like a temple and *ji* like [its] ornaments’, attributed to Fujiwara Teika (Kindaichi et al. 1988: 170), would make it possible to describe Japanese grammatical markers as dependent content obligatorily accompanying lexical elements (in order to form a complete word unit in a certain syntactical context). Despite this, Japanese grammatical elements tend to appear rather as dictionary entries, described independently, often instead of lexical elements. This fact seems to be closely related to the non-existence of declension (as opposed to the ag-

glutinating phenomena of the Japanese language) in the Japanese linguistic tradition. Furthermore, it is especially so in the case of Japanese nouns, that a lexical element may be treated as a graphical unit. In such an approach, the (uninflected) ideogram boundaries are automatically identified with word boundaries. While it may look trivial at first glance, this kind of approach dominates in contemporary grammars of Japanese, be they focused on the old or modern language.

3. School grammar – origins

The script was adapted to the needs of the Japanese from an isolating language – Chinese, with considerable consequences as a result. It is necessary to notice that former and contemporary icons of *gaikokugo* 外国語 ‘foreign languages’, that is, Dutch and English, respectively, from which certain concepts of contemporary Japanese grammar were more or less directly borrowed, are also isolating languages with analytical constructions prevailing in their morphology. Ellipsis of sentence elements is rare in both of them, since omitted elements are not easy to restore. Furthermore, Dutch and English reveal a relatively uncomplicated morphology, especially when it comes to nouns, and it may be considered that without the notion of declension not much would be (and not much is indeed) lost in their grammar. In isolating languages, in which word order is more important than word forms, syntax emerges in a natural and obvious way as the basic level of grammatical reflection. Accordingly, morphological properties tend to be overlooked.

The Japanese language, however, is typologically different from Dutch and English. Analytical constructions are relatively rare and complex agglutinating phenomena may (and should) be described within word boundaries. Japanese is a non-isolating language, with frequent inversions and ellipsis (sentence elements are relatively easy to restore), despite the fixed word order in a sentence. Word forms are more important than word order. Japanese agglutinating suffixes (*ji*) are strictly required in syntactical contexts of the lexical elements’ (*shi*) usage. It is also precisely clear, when lexical elements require no grammatical components (morphological zero).

4. Grammatical tradition

For historical reasons, the isolating methodology tends to dominate in the description of agglutinating properties of Japanese. As a consequence of this, a striking lack of balance between the descriptive techniques used towards various categories of the Japanese lexicon exists. Japanese conjugated elements belonging to the *yōgen* 用言 class are usually described in the first place (even though the Japanese school grammar approach based on multiple *kei* 形 instead of a single conjugational stem may appear unintelligible for grammarians of other languages). The elements belonging to the category of *taigen*, considered uninflected, are most often described as one-element paradigms, usually after all other categories of the lexicon have been listed and described in a grammar.

Instead of Japanese nouns, the particles *joshi* 助詞, including noun particles, tend to be in the centre of grammarians' focus. A systematized noun agglutinative paradigm is unavailable in contemporary grammars of Japanese. Actual complete nominal forms (consisting of *shi* + *ji*) are hence analyzed within one sentence unit, but not necessarily as one-word units.

When it is *joshi*, not the actual complete noun forms with lexical element and *joshi*, which are subjects of description, their functions (or rather: meanings) are derived from actual syntactical contexts. It is the syntax, not the morphology, that is analyzed, with one unavoidable and immediate result. Since the units consisting of the nominal component and *joshi* are not recognized as single words, the *joshi* meanings in actual syntactical contexts tend to emerge as innumerable. It is commonly known, at least since the Noam Chomsky era, that while the number of words is finite – and word paradigms are probably less numerous than words – the instances of actual word usage are indefinite. As is demonstrated in the following sections, Japanese grammar deprived of the noun paradigm may not be considered reliable.

5. The case of *rentaishi*

A typical example of the Japanese preference of syntax over morphology and its consequences for the model of Japanese school grammar is the contemporary existence of the so-called *rentaishi* 連体詞, elements recognized, according to dictionary and encyclopedia definitions, as independent units used solely for modifying *taigen* elements (Matsumura 1988: 2575, Tanaka 1987: 568). It remains unclear, which elements should be classified as *rentaishi*, since most (or even all) of them are nominal and verbal units (in their fixed genitive or attributive forms, respectively). Other forms of such elements have been abandoned in the process of Japanese language development, of which grammatical sources of Japanese are often aware (cf. Tanaka 1987: 568). Due to the fact that many different elements may function as *taigen* modifiers, this class may be considered an open category.

Miller (rightly) objected against recognizing the Japanese *keiyōdōshi* 形容動詞 ‘adjectival nouns’ as elements of *yōgen* class and postulated to replace them with the copula, traditionally (and contrary to linguistic facts) viewed solely as one of the obligatory components of adjectival nouns. At the same time, he failed to recognize *rentaishi*, which he classified as pre-nouns, a completely unnecessary category. According to Miller, pre-nouns “are forms occurring before and modifying nouns: *kono* ‘this,’ *sono* ‘that (near by),’ *ano* ‘that (far off),’ *onaji* ‘the same,’ *kaku* ‘each, every,’ *aru* ‘a certain,’ *dono* ‘which?’” (Miller 1967: 335). As can be seen, also the element not functioning solely as a nominal modifier, that is *onaji*, and the Sino-Japanese element *kaku*, which belongs to a different sub-system of vocabulary than native Japanese elements, have been classified within this class. In such a way, the illusionary existence of *rentaishi* (defined on syntactical premises) is chosen instead of the actual declension of nominal elements. The confusion resulting from this fact may easily be reflected by the three examples below (1.a–1.c) taken from one page of a school edition of a Classical Japanese text, in which two of three elements *sono* その, traditionally recognized as belonging to *rentaishi*, are described as *daimeishi* 代名詞 ‘pronouns’ with accompanying *kakujoshi* 格助詞, lit. ‘case particles’, and one remaining element is not described at all, which might suggest that it was recognized as a noun – typically not marked at all in grammatical comments of Japa-

nese. While in this specific instance it might have been a misprint, the vague and inconsistent marking of selected grammar elements may be pointed out as a characteristic though undocumented feature of the Japanese grammatical tradition.

1.

- a) その をとこ 身 を うえなき もの に 思ひなし て *So no oto-ko mi o yōnaki mono ni omoinashi te* ‘The man came to think that he was leading a meaningless life’ (marked as pronoun + *kakujoshi*)
- b) その 沢 の ほとりの 木 の 陰 に 下りゐ て *So no sawa no hotori no ki no kage ni orii te* ‘They got off [their horses] and sat in the shadow of a tree near the marsh’ (marked as pronoun + *kakujoshi*)
- c) その 沢 に かきつばた いと おもしろく 咲き たり。 *So no sawa ni kakitsubata ito omoshiroku saki tari.* ‘Very nice irises bloomed on the marsh.’ (marked as “0” [= noun?] + *kakujoshi*) (Amagai 1996: 31)

NOTE: The *ad hoc* English translations of all examples quoted in this paper were made by the author. The original versions of Japanese classical texts were quoted exactly as they were spaced in the quoted sources of their contemporary school editions. As can be seen, lexical elements are separated from their grammatical markers, both in case of elements that are regarded as inflected (= conjugated: verbs and adjectives) and uninflected (= nouns), which proves that Japanese sources are consistent in overlooking complete word forms, for the sake of clear-cut distinguishing between the lexical and grammatical elements.

6. Case “meanings”

According to the method of non-declensional description of declensional phenomena, elaborate definitions are created for the “meanings” of isolated grammatical markers. While the noun marker *o* may be, both in Classical and Modern Japanese, related in the most unambiguous and comprehensible way to the function of the accusative case, isolating definitions of Japanese agglutinating phenomena reveal a strong preference to define their actual meanings, not grammatical functions. It may be proved, among others, on the basis of the following six meanings of *o* (the *joshi* in a certain syntactical context is described in the quoted text

instead of a complete word form, independent of a specific context) provided by Samuel E. Martin (Martin 1975: 40):

1. direct object (= the affected of a verb): AFFECTIVE object, CATHECTIC object,
2. place traversed (with *wataru*, *tōru*, *aruku*, *tobu*): TRAVERSAL object,
3. place departed from (= *kara*) (with quasi-intransitive verbs of leaving such as *deru*, *tatsu*, *oriru*): ABLATIVE object,
4. time spent (TEMPORAL object) as in *Tōkyō de isshō o kurasu*,
5. “orphaned object” (*Yuki no naka o [...] dōmo osore-irimashita*),
6. antithesis (*sore o* ‘despite that’).

As can be easily verified, the semantic classification used in the above example has no limits and leads to absurd solutions. It does not require a significant amount of time and effort to prove that the list of meanings provided by Martin is, at best, far from complete. One may promptly point out that in Japanese it is not only the illusionary “verbs of leaving” listed above that govern the appropriate usage of the grammatical element *o*. Why not supply the list with “verbs of cognition, such as *kangaeru*, *shiru*”, with a COGNITIVE object, “verbs of oblivion: *wasureru*, *oite kuru*, *oite iku*”, with an OBLIVION object, “verbs of disdain, such as *okotaru*, *anadoru*”, with a DISDAINED object, and “verbs of overlooking, such as *miotosu*, *minogasu*”, with an OMISSION object”? In this point the semantic (instead of morphological) methodology turns out to be of no use.

7. Nouns in Classical Japanese

A typical school classification of Classical Japanese grammatical markers is shown on Figure 1. The distinction between *kakujoshi* (the literary meaning of this term, ‘case particles’, is especially interesting in the context of ignoring the noun paradigm in Japanese linguistic tradition), *setsuzokujoshi* 接続助詞 ‘connecting particles’, *kakarijoshi* 係助詞 ‘triggering particles’ (considered responsible for evoking bracket constructions *kakarimusubi* 係り結び, explained further in the following section), and *fukujoshi* 副助詞 ‘auxiliary particles’ is based on syntax, not on word forms. Grammatical elements related to the Japanese noun

The actual usage of grammatical elements reveals that, while *kakujoshi* are specialized case markers, *kakarijoshi* frequently correspond to them as modifying nouns. *Setsuzokujoshi* and *fukujoshi* with a noun or a *rentaikei* 連体形 form of conjugated elements (considered the ‘*taigen*-conjunctive form’, but actually functioning as a gerund and declinable – to be further explained in one of the following sections) are not distinguishable from case markers.

Also, apart from the fact that the functions of contemporary elements *wa* は and *mo* も are different from the respective units of Classical Japanese, they are traditionally not considered case markers. This is similar to the situation of the contemporary English articles (*a(n)*, *the*), which, probably due to their prepositional properties, are traditionally not described as case markers, although their syntactical constraints could justify such a solution, unknown to the grammarians of English at the moment (the fact that English declension would probably not have been significantly enriched in this way, had they been treated as case markers, is of secondary importance for the phenomena in question).

Do *kakujoshi* function on a different level to case markers? This can be explained, in the context of the contemporary usage of *wa* as a theme marker, with two simple syllogisms.

MAJOR PREMISE: sentence theme is a noun →

MINOR PREMISE: noun is a basic element of the *wa* phrase (which makes no sense without it) →

CONCLUSION: it is the theme (noun), not the phrase, that is subject to marking (q.e.d.)

MAJOR PREMISE: case is related to syntax →

MINOR PREMISE: *wa* marks the sentence theme (noun) in regular syntactical contexts →

CONCLUSION: *wa* is a case marker (q.e.d.)

As has thus been demonstrated, there is no methodological reason to deny the function of *wa* as a contemporary case marker, since it marks the noun (not the phrase) in regular syntactical contexts. The functions of classical markers recognized traditionally as *kakarijoshi* are no different. The same applies to regular instances of the so-called particle elements occurring with nouns or nominal elements. Selected instances of such

usage, traditionally not perceived by the grammarians of Classical Japanese, are shown in the following sections.

8. *Kakarimusubi* – declension related?

Kakarimusubi is a phenomenon of syntactical and rhetorical nature. Five elements recognized traditionally as *kakarijoshi*: *zo* ぞ, *koso* こそ, *namu* なむ, *ya* や and *ka* か trigger off a specific form of the noun or sentence predicate (*rentaikei* or *izenkei* 已然形 ‘perfect form’, respectively), bringing at the same time the conventional rhetorical effect of emphasis or doubt (question). As can be seen in the following examples (2.a–2.e), *kakarijoshi* accompany nouns, which is by no means neutralized by their frequent usage as double case-markers, as *tsukikage bakari zo* (2.a) and *okori ni koso* (2.b). The phenomenon of double case-marking confirms the agglutinating character of the Japanese language.

In school descriptions of Classical Japanese texts, *kakarimusubi* is traditionally deprived of its nominal character. At best it is the construction trigger (the *kakarijoshi*) and the final predicate form that are marked as *kakari* 係 and *musubi* 結, respectively. This very fact seems to distract the reader’s attention from nouns and complete word forms in the manner typical for the description of an isolating language, which Japanese, to repeat, is not.

2.

- a) 月かげ ばかり ぞ、八重葎 に も さはら ず さし入り たる。
Tsukikage bakari zo, yaemugura ni mo sawara zu sashiiri taru.
 ‘[Only] the moonlight sneaked inside [the garden], not even touching the tangled wild grass.’ (Nichieisha 1974: 50)
- b) 唐土 に も、かかる 事 の 起こり に こそ、世 も 乱れ あし
 かり けれ *Morokoshi ni mo, kakaru koto no okori ni koso, yo mo mi-dare ashikari kere* ‘Also in China, such [precisely the same] incident gave rise to a terrible disturbance in the court...’ (Nichieisha 1974: 16)
- c) 武蔵 の 国 の (…) 男 なむ、 (…) 飛ぶ やう に 逃げ け
 る。 *Musashi no kuni no [...] onoko namu [...] tobu yō ni nige keru.*
 ‘It was [no one other than] the man [...] from Musashi province, who [...] fled away as if he was flying.’ (Suzuki 1969: 30)

- d) さきの世にも、御契りや深りけむ、世になく清らなる玉の男御子さへ生まれたまひぬ。 *Saki no yo ni mo, michigiri ya fukari kemu, yo ni naku kiyoranaru tama no onokomiko sae umare tamai nu.* ‘Was it destiny that a Prince, the boy like pure treasure not to be found anywhere in this world, was born?’ (Nichieisha 1974: 22)
- e) いつか若やかなる人などさはしたりし。 *Itsu ka waka-yakanaru hito nado sa wa shitari shi.* ‘Did the young ever do such a [disgusting] thing?’ (Anzai 1996: 101)

9. Rentaikei = gerund?

The *rentaikei* form of conjugated elements may function like a regular noun, which is similar to the gerund in other languages. Regardless of this, the marking of *rentaikei* modifiers is inconsistent among different sources, which is shown in the examples below for the markers of the Japanese locative case (*ni* に, 3.a–3.b) and accusative case (*o* を, 4.a–4.b), respectively. The reference list of contemporary Japanese cases is given in one of the following sections of this paper.

3.

- a) 雀の子の、ねず鳴きするにをどり来る。 *Suzume no ko no, nezunakisuru ni odorikuru.* ‘A little sparrows jumps to someone who makes a sound like a mouse.’ (*rentaikei* + *ni* marked as *setsuzokujoshi*) (Anzai 1996: 194)
- b) をかしげなるおよびにとらへて *okashigenaru oyobi ni toraete* ‘[the child] takes it into [its] cute fingers’ (N + *ni* marked as *kakujoshi*) (Anzai 1996: 194)

Despite its (erroneous) marking as *setsuzokujoshi* in 3.a, the *rentaikei* element functions like a gerund, which is also reflected in its nominal meaning in the English translation. It is exactly the same marking, which is recognized as a noun with a locative case marker in 3.b.

4.

- a) いとちひさき塵のありけるを目ざとに見つけて *ito chiisaki chiri no arikeru o mezato ni mitsuke te* ‘finds out quickly [that there is] a very small piece of dust’ (*rentaikei* + *o* marked as *kakujoshi*) (Anzai 1996: 194)

- b) 「かかる 道 は いかで か いまする」と いふ を 見れ ば、
見し 人 なり けり。 “*Kakaru michi wa ikade ka imasuru*” to *iu o mire ba, mi shi hito nari keri*. ‘When they looked at the man who exclaimed: “What are you doing on the road like this?!”’, it proved to be someone they had known.’ (*rentaikei* + *o* marked as *kakujoshi*) (Amagai 1996: 34)
- c) 富士 の 山 を 見れ ば *Fuji no yama o mire ba* ‘When they saw Mount Fuji’ (N + *o* marked as *kakujoshi*) (Amagai 1996: 35)

As can be seen in 4.a–4.c, the school interpretations of Japanese classical texts are not consistent in denying the nominal character of *rentaikei* elements. The accusative case marker is recognized as a case particle in all three instances, which come from two different sources. This does not alter the essentially nominal properties of *rentaikei* in such usages.

Contemporarily, it is *ren’yōkei* 連用形, lit. ‘the *yōgen*-conjunctive form’ (*yōgen* 用言 is a traditional category grouping the Japanese conjugated elements), that is used in Japanese as a gerund. Miller identified the contemporary *ren’yōkei* as a gerund, even though it has been done in an extremely intricate manner (cf. Miller 1967: 319). The gerund uses of this element may also appear in classical text, as shown below in 5.

5.

- a) 京 には あら じ、あづま の 方 に 住む べき 国 もとめ に
とて 行き けり。 *Kyō ni wa ara ji, azuma no kata ni sumu beki kuni motome ni tote iki keri*. ‘He decided not to stay in the capital and set off to the East with the intention to search for a[nother] place to inhabit.’ (*ren’yōkei* + *ni* marked as *kakujoshi*) (Amagai 1996: 31)

As shown, the *ren’yōkei* + *ni* element is recognized as a case marker in the above example, even though such usage is not mentioned in the table of grammatical markers by Ogino 2003, presented in Figure 1 above.

10. *Rentaikei* – temporal and causal?

A combination of the *rentaikei* form with case markers appears on a regular basis in constructions recognized here as temporal and causal (although a significantly more specific description of such usage could and should be achieved after further investigation). Examples 6.a–6.b with

instances of such usage of the locative element *ni* and accusative element *o* show that such phenomena are often neglected in school grammar descriptions and marked instead as *setsuzokujoshi*.

6.

- a) 三尺の御几帳のうしろに さぶらふに *sanshaku no mikichō no ushiro ni saburau ni* ‘while I was performing my duties behind the three-foot-high screen’ (*rentaikei* + *ni* marked as *setsuzokujoshi*) (Anzai 1996: 198)
- b) 絵などとり出でて 見せさせ給ふを *e nado toriide te mise sase tamau o* ‘although [the Empress] was taking out and showing me pictures’ (*rentaikei* + *o* marked as *setsuzokujoshi*) (Anzai 1996: 198)

As can be seen in 7.a, other sources consistently mark the grammatical elements following *rentaikei* as case markers.

7.

- a) 宇津の山にいたりて、わが入らむとする道は、いと暗う細きに、つたかへでは茂り、物心ぼそく、すずろなるめを見ることと 思ふに、修行者あひたり。 *Utsu no yama ni itari te, wa ga ira mu to suru michi wa, ito kurō hosoki ni, tsuta kae-de wa shigeri, monogokorobosoku, suzuronaru me o miru koto to omou ni, sugyōza ai tari.* ‘They reached Mount Utsu and, since the road they wanted to enter was very dark and narrow, there were plenty of ivies and maples [obstructing their way] and when they thought that they had encountered serious difficulties, they met some pilgrims.’ (*rentaikei* + *ni* marked as *kakujoshi* in both cases) (Amagai 1996: 34)

The purely nominal (gerundial) usage of conjugated elements is not anything unusual in languages other than Japanese. It is illustrated by the following examples from English (8.a–8.b) and Polish (8.c–8.d). This again attracts the researcher’s attention to the notion of the nominal paradigm and its actual usage, not present either in classical or in contemporary grammatical descriptions of Japanese.

8.

- a) *on his arrival*
- b) *to their surprise*
- c) *wbrew ich pragnieniu* ‘despite their wish’
- d) *ku jej rozbawieniu* ‘to her amusement’.

11. From another angle

As has been pointed out, Japanese grammatical descriptions tend to neglect the existence of complete word forms for the sake of their isolated components. This is also reflected by the non-existence of the nominal paradigm in Japanese grammar. Several examples presented above serve to prove that the nominal syntax phenomena in Classical Japanese are case-related. This statement applies also to the contemporary Japanese noun and its paradigm.

One important argument for the consistent description of the Japanese noun paradigm in terms of declension is that (in the languages of a non-isolating nature) morphology offers significantly less variations than semantics or syntax, being based on a limited list of complete forms, which can be easily verified. It is the morphological approach that makes it possible to consider one case marker (including also a zero marker) as a demonstration of one case instance, regardless of multiple (and probably unlimited) case meanings in different actual syntax contexts. When such an approach is implemented, it may be expected that the noun-agglutinating pattern may conveniently be viewed as one paradigm. While contemporary case number and case basic functions are uncertain and vague, they can be easily listed and verified on the basis of Japanese morphology. Actual case interdependencies may be described instead of case “meanings”, which are illusionary and misleading. Semantics may serve to further link (not: split) secondary and primary case markers, making it also possible to relate the Japanese nominal phenomena to their counterparts in different languages.

12. Contemporary Japanese cases

This author is not a specialist on grammar of Classical Japanese. He remains painfully aware of the fact that his view of Classical grammar phenomena may be superficial and require corrections. At the same time, it should be noted that the Classical Japanese noun viewed from a general perspective does not reveal substantially different properties from Contemporary Japanese nouns. The list of contemporary cases of the Japanese noun is available, both in print and online (Jabłoński 2012). It is

quoted below in Figure 2 and supplemented with minor corrections, including case terms in their Japanese version. Case terms, along with new case names that do not exist in the grammatical tradition of English, Polish, Latin and Japanese, were coined with the intention to point out the most basic functions and properties of cases, with clear allusions to the case terms already used.

The list on Figure 2 may be a model for the creation of a similar list of Classical Japanese cases. There is no need and space to provide here the detailed explanation of the model, though some of its properties should be emphasized in order to make it easier to understand the basic premises and intentions that lie behind its creation.

The Japanese nominative case was recognized as being marked with a morphological zero, in accordance both with linguistic facts and Japanese lexicographic tradition. The nominative case should be recognized as denominating a noun designate and not be mistaken with marking a sentence subject, which is a syntactical, not a morphological phenomenon.

To facilitate the recognition of case properties, the Japanese (fifteen) cases have been classified as (five) primary cases (marked with asterisks) and (ten) secondary cases. The (seven) secondary cases linked to the nominative case share the syntactical property of marking the elements of the main noun unit of a phrase. The (three) secondary cases linked to the locative case share the semantic property of marking a place or a point. There is nothing more to the distinction into primary and secondary cases, which may be easily dropped, should it prove useless or misleading.

Case markers have also been divided into primary (one marker for each case) and secondary (in brackets). This illustrates a certain compromise made for the sake of simplicity and oneness of case units. The main premise for this was that primary or secondary cases basically (or totally) share the same functions and/or meaning. At least some of the secondary case markers may easily be considered instances of a double and/or lexicalized case marking, as it is especially in the themative, rhemative, distinctive, enumerative, locative and terminative cases.

Themative and rhemative cases are a substantial supplement to the set of cases proposed by other theories of declension in Japanese. They have been recognized on the basis of premises mentioned above and, in this author's opinion, may serve well to achieve the full view of the Japanese nominal paradigm.

English	Polish	Latin	Japanese	Case marker(s)
*NOM inative	mianownik	<i>nominativus</i>	<i>shukaku</i> 主格	<i>N</i> , i.e. morphological zero
THE mative	podmiotnik	<i>propositivus</i>	<i>daikaku</i> 題格	<i>Nwa</i> (<i>Nnara</i>)
RHE mative	przedmiotnik	<i>nucleativus</i>	<i>shikaku</i> 指格	<i>Nga</i> (<i>Nkoso</i> , <i>Ndake</i> , <i>Nbakari</i> , <i>Nnomi</i> , <i>Nshika</i> , <i>Nkurai</i> / <i>Ngurai</i>)
DIS tinctive	wyróżnik	<i>distinctivus</i>	<i>chūkaku</i> 中格	<i>Nmo</i> (<i>Nsae</i> , <i>Ndemo</i> , <i>Ntomo</i> , <i>Ndatte</i> , <i>Nsura</i>)
ENU merative	wylicznik	<i>comitativus</i>	<i>renkaku</i> 連格	<i>Nto</i> (<i>Ntoshite</i>)
EXE mplificative	ogólnik	<i>exemplificativus</i>	<i>reikaku</i> 例格	<i>N'ya</i> (<i>N'yara</i> , <i>Nnado</i> , <i>Nnante</i> , <i>Nnari</i> , <i>Ndano</i>)
VOC ative	wołacz	<i>vocativus</i>	<i>kokaku</i> 呼格	<i>N'yo</i> (<i>N'ya</i>)
INT errogative	pytajnik	<i>dubitativus</i>	<i>gikaku</i> 疑格	<i>Nka</i>
*GEN itive	dopełniacz	<i>genetivus</i>	<i>zokkaku</i> 属格	<i>Nno</i>
*ACC usative	biernik	<i>accusativus</i>	<i>taikaku</i> 対格	<i>N'o</i>
*INS trumental	narzędnik	<i>instrumentalis</i>	<i>gukaku</i> 具格	<i>Nde</i>
*LOC ative	miejscownik	<i>locativus</i>	<i>tenkaku</i> 点格	<i>Nni</i> (<i>Nnite</i> , <i>Nniyotte</i> , <i>Nnioite</i>)
TER minative	ogranicznik	<i>terminativus</i>	<i>genkaku</i> 限格	<i>Nmade</i> (<i>Nmadeni</i>)
ALL ative	odsyłacz	<i>allativus</i>	<i>kikaku</i> 寄格	<i>N'e</i>
ABL ative	oddalacz	<i>ablativus</i>	<i>rikaku</i> 離格	<i>Nkara</i> (<i>N'yori</i>)

Figure 2. List of contemporary Japanese cases (modified after Jabłoński 2012)

The presented model of contemporary Japanese declension may be subject to future corrections and revisions. The only condition *sine qua non* is that morphological, not syntactical, premises are implemented to view the complete noun paradigm, not its unrelated fragments used in actual though isolated syntactical contexts. It is this author's conviction that the declensional properties of Classical Japanese in its several varieties may also be explained and described in a similar manner, that is, on morphological, not on syntactical premises.

13. Instead of conclusions

One of the provisional pre-conclusions of this paper might state that the grammar tradition, both native and imported, may not necessarily offer the appropriate tools for the description of the actual grammar phenomena of a code. It may be supposed that the description of any language could probably reveal interesting artefacts that are based more on a traditional approach than on linguistic facts.

Actual (often: scattered) syntax contexts and semantic peculiarities are always more an intricate object of description than regular morphological phenomena. Needless to mention, this statement may not be applicable to isolating languages, especially those, which show no changes in complete word forms. However, when morphological properties of a language are bare facts, it may be considered on the basis of the linguist's common sense that it is more effective to use them than to neglect them.

This author's native tongue is Polish, the (Slavic) language universally classified as inflected, with a well-established paradigm of declension modelled after its Latin prototype. As such, the model may be judged as not fully fitting the actual needs and properties of Polish language users and the language itself. It is possible, however, to view the Polish noun paradigm via its declensional dimensions, including, among others, cases – convenient abstracts for dealing with unnumbered meanings of nominal forms in actual syntactical contexts. It also goes without saying that Polish declension is nothing more than a tool – not a declaration of faith. It may be removed at any moment from the set of linguistic tools available for the linguists of Polish, should one find a better way to describe the nominal paradigm of the language. It is not impossible that

such a decision would be equal to switching to an infinite number of actual usages of Polish nominal forms, but it is the decision of the researcher which description patterns should be considered more useful and balanced.

Japanese is an agglutinating language with a variety of complete noun forms, each consisting of a lexical element and a grammatical marker. For a number of decades it has been described with the use of an isolating methodology that is both foreign to Japanese and unbalanced in its preference for one-element paradigms. What could not have been imported into the Japanese linguistic tradition by its isolating grammar founders, may now perhaps be easily and instantly complemented with the ready-to-use tools available from inflected languages.

It should not be expected that the implementation of new methodology is going to foster a revolution in the native descriptions of Japanese language phenomena, not to mention whether (or not) the methodology is actually going to be implemented at all. Instead, it may be ignored or, at best, perceived as bizarre and criticized. But perhaps it could enable researchers of the Japanese language (and also comparative studies) to see more due to its focus on the complete nominal paradigm. This paper, therefore, may serve as documentation of one out of numerous steps to the better understanding of the actual properties of the Japanese language.

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